



# HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

An electronic newsletter in support of public safety services in Montana  
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## IM Weekly Highlights



- Infrastructure at the Sawtell site, elevation 9,880 feet, is now complete, and the first step to a formal site partnership with the State of Idaho has begun. As shown in the photo, the IM tower is located to the left of the shelter. The State of Idaho plans to place its microwave and radio equipment on the monopole to the right. Both entities will share space in the shelter. The IM is excited about this first cross-border shared site in the project.



## PSSB Highlights

- The public is invited to attend a 700 MHz Regional Planning Committee meeting in Bozeman on Tues., Oct. 12 at 2:00 pm in the University Room of the Holiday Inn, 5 Baxter Lane. Comments and recommendations on the draft plan are encouraged. Visit [http://pssb.mt.gov/700\\_mhz\\_plan.mcpx](http://pssb.mt.gov/700_mhz_plan.mcpx) for more info.

## IM Technical Committee Approves Master Controller Re-Location to Richland Co.

By E. Wing Spooner [espooner@mt.gov](mailto:espooner@mt.gov)

At their Mon., Sept. 27 meeting in Helena, members of the IM Technical Committee (IMTC) approved a recommendation to relocate the Eastern Master Controller from the Belle Prairie site in Dawson County to the Richland County Law and Justice Center. The bid for constructing the Belle Prairie master controller site was two-and-a-half times higher than estimated.

Members reviewed an extensive list of pros and cons for re-locating the master controller to either the Fallon Communications Site or the Richland County site. From a technical perspective, the Richland County site had more advantages over the Fallon site. It also provides better access and security than the Dawson County site. Work is already underway to remove sprinkler systems and

water lines, install a halon computer protection system, and enhance security in the available space at the Richland Co. Law and Justice Center.

The Belle Prairie site will still be constructed as an intermediate radio site; otherwise, towers at the Makoshika and Fox Creek 2 sites would need to be replaced and/or tower heights increased—at a cost considerably higher than building the intermediate radio site at Belle Prairie. After the IMTC approved the re-location recommendation, Kevin reported that the Eastern Tier consortium members also voted in favor of the move.

Several other items of business were addressed, including the fact that the Carburetion & Turbo Systems Company is retrofitting generator fuel delivery systems along the Northern Tier. Charlie Gilmore, Lewis and Clark County, has been working with Julie Noland, PSSB, on firewall issues to enhance system monitoring. Jack Spillman, Flathead County, cautioned about installing an e-position patch upgrade if an MCC7500 console is involved. Jack also reported that Bendix King M150 and P150 P-25 digital radios have passed the IM subscriber unit testing criteria and are now approved for use on the IM P-25 statewide radio system. The only radios approved for use on the system to date are certain Bendix King, EF Johnson, Kenwood and Motorola radios. For more information on subscriber unit criteria and testing, visit: [http://test.interop.mt.gov/subscriber\\_unit\\_criteria.mcpx](http://test.interop.mt.gov/subscriber_unit_criteria.mcpx).

Kevin Bruski gave an update on PSIC-funded infrastructure and microwave projects. Except for clean-up work and power installation to one site, all the other Beaverhead and Madison sites that make up the Southwest Loop are complete. Two sites in Billings, Greeno and Coburn, are still waiting for power to be hooked up. Site walks are being conducted this week on the PSIC-2 microwave project. The sub-contractor also is installing microwave antennas and delivering equipment to other sites, with the intention of having all microwave and electronics cold installed by the middle of Oct. The contractors will continue to work on all projects until weather keeps them out.

Members also discussed PSIC Strategic Technology Reserve (STR) funds, and research will continue on costs of portable generators and a combination trailer, tower, shelter and generator unit that could serve as a portable communications

# HEARD ACROSS MONTANA

site to be deployed anywhere in the state.

Considerable time was spent reviewing the Site Maintenance Standards that were drafted at the last meeting. Julie Noland and Wing Spooner, PSSB, will re-design the information into pass-fail inspection forms to be reviewed one more time before an electronic vote on their approval. Kevin clarified that the intent of the standards is to clarify responsibilities of site managers, and provide accountability that site maintenance work is being properly performed. The plan is for the IM to provide site maintenance reimbursement funding only if local jurisdiction have performed annual inspections, submitted appropriate paperwork and taken necessary corrective actions. The inspections also will allow the IM to be better informed of site maintenance issues, enabling it to caution other site managers about potential problems in advance of their occurrence.

After consortium and state agency representatives gave brief status reports, the meeting was adjourned. The next IMTC meeting is scheduled for Mon., Oct. 25, at the MACo offices, 2715 Skyway Drive, in Helena.

## Informative Tri-County Consortium Meeting

By Dan Sullivan [dsullivan@mt.gov](mailto:dsullivan@mt.gov)

The Tri-County Consortium met Tues., Sept. 28, in Helena with Sheriffs Dutton (Lewis and Clark), Doolittle (Jefferson) and Ludwig (Broadwater) in attendance along with Vice-Chair Bill Fleiner (Broadwater) and Sally Buckles (Jefferson).

The consortium is updating its bylaws and will have revisions completed by the next meeting. Sally asked members to review and send suggested changes to her at [sbuckles@jeffco.mt.gov](mailto:sbuckles@jeffco.mt.gov). Election of officers will take place at the Nov. meeting.

Bill reported on the IM Business Plan. User fees will be necessary in the long term to sustain the IM system. In the short term, some build-out funds can be diverted to pay a portion of ongoing system administration and operation expenses. This strategy will facilitate users getting onto the system.

Sheriff Dutton reported on requirements for operating the Master Controller. At this time approximately 2500 users are on the radio system. Of those, 600 system users are located in Lewis and Clark County, which has 11 radio sites. Sheriff Dutton went on to explain costs for operation and maintenance, including administration of the master controller, upgrades to software and hardware, site development, and maintenance and repair.

Members also discussed "Storm Planning" and the ability of deputies and officers to seamlessly

communicate via talk groups over broad geographic areas. In addition, they agreed to recruit fire services members to become active in consortium meetings.

The next meeting of the Tri-County Consortium is set for Tues., Oct. 26, at the MACo Conference Room, 2717 Skyway Drive, in Helena.

## Upcoming Meetings

- **Mon., Oct. 4**  
IM Finance Committee (IMFC)  
Helena • 9:00 am - 5:00 pm (**Please Note: Time Change**)  
Anderson ZurMuehlen, 828 Great Northern Blvd.
- **Mon., Oct. 4**  
IM Governance Committee (IMGC) - **Meeting Cancelled**
- **Tues., Oct. 5**  
IM Project Directors Meeting (IMPD)  
Helena • 9:00 am - 3:00 pm  
State Capitol, Room 152 (**Please note the location**)
- **Mon.-Thurs., Oct. 4-7**  
Tribal Homeland Security Conference  
Polson • KwaTaNuk Resort, 49708 US Highway 93 East  
POCs: Robert DesRosier 406-450-0646 and  
Sheri Lanz 406-841-3911
- **Mon. -Tues., Oct. 11-12**  
Call Taker Training for Child Abductions - Free Tuition  
Bozeman • 8:00 – 5:00 pm  
Holiday Inn, 5 E Baxter Lane  
E-mail Susan Bomstad at [sbomstad@co.missoula.mt.us](mailto:sbomstad@co.missoula.mt.us).
- **Tues., Oct. 11**  
Region 25 700 MHz Regional Planning Meeting  
Bozeman • 2:00 – 5:00 pm  
Holiday Inn, 5 E Baxter Lane
- **Tues.-Thurs., Oct. 12-14**  
Montana Chapter of APCO Conference  
Bozeman • Holiday Inn, 5 E Baxter Lane  
[http://www.mtapco.org/2010\\_Conference.html](http://www.mtapco.org/2010_Conference.html)
- **Fri., Oct. 15**  
Telecommunicator Emergency Response Task Force (TERT) Team Leader Course; Natalie Duran, Instructor  
Bozeman • 8:00 – 5:00 pm  
Holiday Inn, 5 E Baxter Lane  
E-mail Susan Bomstad at [sbomstad@co.missoula.mt.us](mailto:sbomstad@co.missoula.mt.us).
- **Tues.-Wed., Oct. 26- 28**  
Advanced Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) Course  
Big Timber • 8:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Carnegie Public Library, 314 McLeod Street  
Hosted by Sweet Grass County 9-1-1  
Call 800-363-9127 to register
- **Mon-Tues., Nov. 8-9**  
Montana Independent Telecom Systems (MITS) Symposium  
Helena • Red Lion Colonial Hotel, 2301 Colonial Dr.  
<http://www.mitstel.com/Symposium/>
- **Tues.-Thurs., Nov. 16-18**  
Western Border Interoperability Working Group  
Regina, SK • Hosted by the Ministry of Corrections,  
Public Safety and Policing  
RCMP Depot, 6101 Dewdney Ave.  
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